



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

The Travel Industry Association (TIA), our industry's advocacy group, has grown tremendously over the years and will continue to grow as TIA, Travel Business Roundtable and the Discover America Partnership combine into one powerful organization within the coming year.

This activity has led the group to expand its role as an organization beyond the strong core programs its members already rely upon, which include forging greater industry unity in recent years, dealing with a greatly changed environment since 9/11, developing stronger efforts to gain a bigger voice in Washington D.C. and working to champion the interests of the traveler.

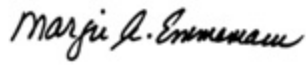
Because of the ever-increasing role of this organization, TIA is considering some additional changes to better reflect the broad interest, vision and future direction of this dynamic organization.

Based on recommendations from a board-led branding committee that I was honored to serve on, TIA and its members are now considering **U.S. Travel Association** as the organization's new name. This recommendation comes after careful consideration on how best to reflect the evolution of the group's activities in recent years and its vision for the future.

The final decision falls into the hands of the members of TIA who will vote to accept or reject the new name. A decision could be made by September.

Look to future editions of *AOT in Action* for updates.

Have a great week.



Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

AOT's Research Section has been Updated

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov.

- [Arizona Tourism Indicators 1st Quarter 2008](#)

For additional information or questions, please contact Beth Billings, Research Specialist, at 602-364-3689 or via e-mail at bbillings@azot.gov.

Trippin' with AOT

Register Now for the 11th Annual Arizona Showcase in Hermosillo

The Arizona Office of Tourism will hold the 11th Annual Arizona Showcase October 2, 2008 in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. This event promotes fall and holiday shopping, attractions and accommodations throughout the State. The highlight of the event will be a charity fashion show with local models - specifically targeting high income families and individuals with a strong propensity to travel. The cost to participate varies from \$900 - \$2,500 depending on type of supplier and level of participation, plus travel expenses. The deadline to participate is September 1, 2008. Early booking discounts may apply. Please contact Kristy Swanson at kswanson@azot.gov or 602-364-3696.

Industry News

TIA's Marketing Outlook Forum to Address Changing Face of Travel

High gas prices, increased airfares, the credit crunch and overall economic jitters are changing travel behaviors. U.S. travelers are shopping on line more for better values, tightening up on food and lodging, and shortening their trips—staying fewer days and not traveling as far.

TIA's Marketing Outlook Forum will feature some of the industry's most prominent leaders who will address these changes, offer predictions about the future, and point you in the direction of new markets. This year's conference will be held in Portland, Oregon from **October 27-30, 2008**.

Among the speakers will be: Bruce Himmelstein, Senior Vice President, Sales & Marketing, Ritz Carlton; Milton Pedraza, Founder and CEO, Luxury Institute; Barbara Leflein, President, Latino Life Research; Barbara Higgins, Vice President, United Contact Centers, United Airlines; Todd Davidson, Chief Executive Officer, Travel Oregon; Joe D'Alessandro, President and CEO, San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau; Caroline Beteta, President & CEO, California Tourism; Lorraine Sileo, Vice President of Research, PhoCusWright and Peter Yesawich, President, YPartnership.

For more information and to register, go to www.tia.org/mof.

U.S. to Add New Visa Requirements; Europe to Follow

Beginning Jan. 12, visitors to the U.S. from visa-waiver countries, most of which are in Europe, will be required to register online and to be screened and authorized for entry. The European Commission is considering a similar system later for visitors from the U.S. and other countries. The new Electronic System for Travel Authorization was ordered by the Department of Homeland Security to identify visitors who might be a threat. Authorization is good for two years or until one's current passport expires. The initial registration can take place any time before the first trip to the U.S. after the system goes into effect. The system goes live Aug. 1 at <http://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>. (www.ModernAgent.com, 7/28)

Industry Calls on Bush to Act on Fuel Crisis

A coalition of some 175 industry stakeholders have sent a Signatory Letter to President Bush urging him to call a special session of Congress to enact urgently needed energy policy legislation. The letter was co-authored by Bob Crandall, former chairman and CEO of American Airlines, and Kevin Phillips, chairman of the Business Travel Coalition. The letter was signed by community airports, leading travel industry associations, blue-chip corporations, airlines, hotels and other travel industry groups, including travel agents and travel management companies. The letter states: "We urge you to call a special session of Congress beginning August 11, 2008 for the sole purpose of debating our energy alternatives and enacting a coherent national energy policy." (www.TravelAgentCentral.com, 7/31)

Demand Rising for Sustainable Travel

Responsibletravel.com's sales jumped by 37 percent year-on-year during the first half of 2008 says [ehotelier](http://ehotelier.com). The company said the big winner was England, which knocked Thailand off the number one most-booked country on its site, with sales growth of 95 percent lifting it from just 14th place in H107. Turkey, 'outside the euro and good value', also saw strong growth, moving up to fifth place from tenth. In contrast the biggest losers were Kenya and China. Kenya fell to 20th from fourth after sales declined by 40 percent, largely as a result of the political unrest earlier this year. China, meanwhile, fell to 23rd this time from seventh last, depressed by adverse publicity about its human rights record in the build-up to the Beijing Olympic Games. Next most popular behind England and Thailand were Egypt, which remained in third, Italy (down from second) and Turkey. Spain moved up to sixth from 12th, Peru slipped to seventh from fifth, Malaysia remained eighth, Morocco remained ninth and Tanzania dropped to tenth from sixth. Justin Francis, responsibletravel.com managing director, said: 'Although a far newer category than say organic or fair trade food, the responsible travel and tourism market is slowly becoming better established. 'As in the food sector increasing numbers of consumers want to know how products (holidays) are made, by whom and with what consequences for the environment and local people. 'However, perhaps the key to our growth is that tourists increasingly want locally distinctive holiday experiences rather than cloned resorts, and travelers are discovering responsible travel is a more enjoyable way to travel.'

Can you Turn Green Consciousness into Green Dollars?

Surveys show that up to nine out of ten Americans are environmentally conscious. Eight out of ten Americans claim to be "green." But are they willing to pay for it? And does concern about the environment represent a market opportunity? "The answer is yes, although primarily with respect to market share, not incremental rates of yields," answers Peter Yesawich, CEO of the Ypartnership. Specially, four out of ten leisure travelers "probably/definitely" would select an environmentally friendly travel supplier if they knew about the supplier's commitment to the environment -- not surprisingly, significantly more women than men agree with this statement, Mr Yesawich says of a recent survey. And although nearly one-half state they're willing to pay higher fares/rates for the services provided by such suppliers, the majority (53 percent) state they are not. Among those willing to pay more, the overwhelming majority (six in ten) report they would pay only up to 9 percent more. "The conclusion is therefore clear: a travel service supplier's commitment to and communication of environmental responsibility may be sufficient to shift market share," he said, adding: "Consumers' reluctance to pay more to support 'green causes' suggests that most, however, that they view the demonstration of this responsibility as an obligation of businesses that should, arguably, be good stewards of the environment anyway." (Report by David Wilkening, Travelmole e-Newsletter)

Study: Boomers are not Bloggers

According to a recent ThirdAge/JWT Boom study, people over age 40 participate heavily in word-of-mouth and value personal recommendations and expert opinions, but they have not embraced social networking or blogs despite being heavy users of other online services. Boomers want to connect and interact with others in their communities around shared interests and common issues, reports [The Center for Media Research](#) but they use more traditional web communications tools, such as email, to keep in touch. Boomers participate in trusted online communities and share opinions about brands. They're also open to traditional marketing and e-marketing, as long as the message is coming from a source or brand they know and trust.

- 75 percent who have received promotional emails about products and services have clicked through to the site being promoted
- More than 55 percent have purchased a product or service promoted in an email
- 93 percent of respondents who have read an article about a website in print (newspaper or magazine) have later visited the site online

Tourism Booming for Page Area

The city, at the center of the Grand Circle Region, is seeing more visitors -- especially motor coach groups. The Page/Lake Powell area appears to be turning back a national and regional trend of reduced tourism, a local official told Page City Council last week.

The city's tourism coordinator said visitation is up, thanks to a boom in visits by motor coaches and the rising popularity of the Grand Circle region. Page is at the hub of the Grand Circle, a collection of a couple dozen National Park Service units stretching from Canyon de Chelly to Zion and from the Grand Canyon to Arches. "The Grand Circle is one of the premier destination areas in the world right now," Dwayne Cassidy told Thursday night's council meeting. "In the Japanese market, the Grand Circle is No. 1." Cassidy based his findings on reports of sales tax revenue, Highway 89 traffic counters and unofficial occupancy figures from local motels.

To read this entire article by Todd Glasenapp, Arizona Daily Sun, please visit, http://www.azdailysun.com/articles/2008/07/28/news/local/20080728_local_178280.txt